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ABSTRACT

The major purpose of this study was to find out how much money colleges and universities pay public school cooperating teachers who supervise student teachers, education students' early field experiences, or pre-student teaching. Two secondary purposes were to determine what other incentives, besides monetary remuneration, are granted and the role that state offices of education play in rewarding cooperating teachers. In a national survey, questionnaires were sents to 715 deans/directors of collegiate teacher training programs; data were collected from 404 colleges and universities. In addition, 46 state departments of education had been reached via telephone survey to date. Results indicate that 70.8 percent of the responding institutions pay an honorarium to cooperating teachers who supervise student teachers. The average amount is $112.00 per student teacher. Only 11.6 percent of the responding institutions paid cooperating teachers who supervise pre-student teachers in their early field experiences. The average payment is $59.00. Additionally, 24 percent of the institutions grant tuition waivers to cooperating teachers, and nearly 30 percent offer additional incentives such as tickets to college/university activities, library cards, parking passes, and use of recreational facilities. (IAH)

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A National Study to Assess Payments and Benefits to Cooperating Teachers Working with Teacher Training Programs

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Paper Presented at the Annual Meeting of the
Association for Teacher Educators

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A National Study to Assess Payments and Benefits to Cooperating Teachers Working with Teacher Training Programs

Introduction

It is common practice for higher education institutions with teacher training programs to utilize the services of public school teachers in elementary and secondary classrooms to work closely with preservice students planning to enter the education profession. In fact the practice of student teaching is perhaps the culminating college experience for teacher education majors. In recent years, most teacher training programs in the United States have also placed increased importance on pre-student teaching field experiences for prospective teachers. That is, increased emphasis is being placed on having education majors experience the "real world" of the classroom before they enroll for student teaching. Early field experience usually includes observation of students and teachers in the schools, tutoring of students, and limited teaching under the guidance of a capable public school teacher.

Researchers in the area of teacher education claim that of all the persons who prepare college students entering the teaching profession, the cooperating teacher has the greatest influence upon a student teacher's success or failure as a future classroom teacher (Balch and Balch, 1988; Funk, et. al., 1982). Yet little seems to be known about how cooperating teachers are selected and rewarded. In a 1991 report, the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE, 1991) suggested that more insight and information is needed into the expectations of cooperating teachers (both those who supervise early field experience work and those who supervise actual student teaching) and the value placed upon their contributions in the teacher training process.

Summary of Research on Benefits to Cooperating Teachers

In order to attract the most qualified public school teachers to help train college/university students planning to become teachers, most teacher education programs offer incentives to public school teachers in hopes of winning their cooperation. Incentives are usually in the form of monetary compensation or tuition waivers. The data currently available suggest that monetary

payments to cooperating public school teachers vary greatly between the 50 states and, in many cases, within institutions in given states.

The AACTE report cited earlier (data collected in Spring 1988) surveyed 90 teacher training institutions and revealed that 75 percent of teacher education programs studied paid a monetary stipend to cooperating teachers who supervised the work of *student teachers*. The mean amount paid was $113 per student teacher. Also, a little more than 25 percent of the institutions offered tuition wavers and provided cooperating teachers with university privileges. Data compiled by Black (1979) ten years earlier indicated that among the 50 states, state offices of education generally do not provide stipends directly to cooperating teachers nor do they provide funds to colleges and universities for compensation to cooperating teachers.

By contrast, few institutions pay cooperating teachers who supervise *pre-student teaching* or early field experience. According to the AACTE report, compensation practices for *pre-student teaching* included:

> The most common method reported (81 percent) was by sending a letter of thanks. One-fifth of the institutions provided privileges such as parking stickers or library cards; another one-fifth issued vouchers for a course. Cash payments averaging $60 were given to cooperating teachers in only 11 percent of the institutions. Other institutions used dinners, banquets, luncheons, and tickets to ball games as a means to reward cooperating teachers (p. 14).

In regards to requirements to become a cooperating teacher (for either student teaching or pre-student teaching early field experience) the AACTE report (1991) found that only 17 percent of institutions surveyed required a course in supervision; 25 percent required attendance at a special seminar. Another survey (Zerr, 1987) of the 50 states, showed that only 26 required a requisite of certification in the teaching field as a qualification to be a cooperating teacher. And, Shaver and Wise (1989) reported that there is no uniformity among states as to requirements for those teachers who guide student teachers and early field experience students in what many deem as the most important learning experience in their teacher training.

The AACTE report gathered information from 228 cooperating teachers to compile a composite profile of the typical cooperating teachers as a 43 year old, White (96 percent) female

(75 percent) who has taught for about 16 years and has been in the same school for an average of 12 years. Fifty percent hold a master's degree and another 10 percent have certificates of advanced study or a doctorate. Cooperating teachers represent all grade levels, with about 60 percent in the elementary classroom and 40 percent in secondary schools.

Purpose of Study

The major purpose of this study was to find out how much money colleges and universities pay cooperating teachers in the public schools who (1) supervise *student teachers*, and (2) who supervise early field experiences or *pre-student teaching*. Two secondary purposes were to determine what other incentives, besides monetary remuneration, are granted; and what role do state offices of education play in rewarding cooperating teachers. Specific questions of inquiry included:

1. What is the average dollar amount paid to cooperating teachers who supervise student teachers in the United States?
2. What is the average dollar amount paid to cooperating teachers who supervise the field experience work of pre-student teachers (early field experience)?
3. To what extent are tuition waivers or other benefits offered as an incentive for cooperating teachers?
4. Do state offices of education participate in the remuneration of cooperating teachers?

Study Procedures and Survey Size

A 17 item, self-administered questionnaire was designed, pretested, and revised to gather needed data. A mailing list of 715 deans/directors of teacher training programs in public and private colleges and universities in the United States was purchased from the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) and was used as the study sample. Questionnaires were mailed to all 715 institutions in October 1991. Usable responses were received from 404 institutions (56.5 percent return) representing all 50 states.

Of the 404 respondents, 60.6 percent represented public institutions. The remaining 39.4 percent were from private colleges/universities. The institutional size of the sample ranged from 400 students to 49,800. The mean institutional size was about 7700 students. On the average,

participating institutions graduated about 200 new teachers each year (average was 207). Most of the institutions (349), 86.4 percent, operated on a semester system. Only 52 schools, or 12.9 percent operated on a quarter system. Three schools reported a trimester system of operation.

In addition, during December 1991 to February 1992, telephone contact was attempted with the state certification officer in each of the 50 states and the District of Columbia. The purpose of the phone survey was to determine if the respective state departments of education provided any monetary remuneration either to cooperating teachers directly or to teacher training institutions to subsidize payments to cooperating teachers. At the time of this writing, contact had been made with 46 states. States not yet contacted included New Jersey, New York, Virginia, and Wisconsin.

Monetary Payments to Cooperating Teachers who Supervise *Student Teaching*

A total of 116 or 29.2 percent of the colleges/universities made no monetary payment at all to cooperating teachers who supervised student teachers. Payments averaging $112 were paid by 70.8 percent of the institutions. These ranged from a low of $25 to a high of $500. More than two-thirds (67.4 percent) paid less than $112. The median payment was $100 with a standard deviation of $78.48.

Comparison between schools operating on semester systems versus quarter systems varied little. The average payment per semester to supervise a student teacher was $114; per quarter was $111. In both quarter and semester systems, the median value was again $100. See Table 1.

Only 7.6 percent of the institutions paid their cooperating teachers on a sliding scale based on either completion of college sponsored course work or experience. For those requiring course work, the average required was 5.5 semester credit hours.

Monetary Payments to Cooperating Teachers who Supervise *Pre-Student Teaching*

Only 47 schools or 11.6 percent reported any monetary payment to cooperating teachers who supervised the early field experience or pre-student teaching of future teachers. The average payment reported was $59 with a median value of $35. The range ran from $7 to $400. The vast majority of

TABLE 1

COMPARATIVE DATA OF DOLLAR AMOUNTS PAID BY COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY TEACHER TRAINING PROGRAMS TO COOPERATING TEACHERS WHO SUPERVISE STUDENT TEACHERS, 1992.

	N	Mean	Median	Range	Standard Deviation
Institutions providing no payment	116	--	--	--	--
Combined data for schools on a semester system and those on a quarter system	286	$111.96	$100	$25 - $500	$78.48
Data only for schools operating on a semester system	244	$114.30	$100	$35 - $500	$79.75
Data only for schools operating on a quarter system	42	$110.91	$100	$25 - $322	$47.37

institutions, 88.4 percent made no monetary remuneration to these cooperating teachers.

Other Benefits Provided Cooperating Teachers who Supervise *Student Teachers* and the Early Field Experience or *Pre-Student Teaching* of Preservice Teachers

Ninety-seven of the responding schools, or 24.0 percent reported granting tuition wavers at their respective institutions to cooperating teachers supervising *student teachers*. These ranged from one credit hour to a dollar value of $624. On the average, the schools offered 2.5 semester credit hours as a waiver.

Only 31 schools, or 7.7 percent offered tuition wavers to cooperating teachers who supervised field experiences of *pre-student teachers*. The average waiver granted these teachers was 3.0 semester credits.

In addition to monetary payments or tuition waivers, 29.4 percent of the institutions (119) offered cooperating teachers a broad array of other benefits. These varied among schools but included adjunct faculty status, library privileges, access to college/university recreational facilities (swimming pool, racquet ball courts, gymnasium, etc.), either free or reduced rates to attend school sponsored athletic or cultural events, discount coupons for use at the bookstore, invitation to recognition dinners, free attendance at college/university sponsored workshops or seminars, etc.

Should Cooperating Teachers be Paid More Money?

In regards to increasing present payments to cooperating teachers, 72.1 percent of the deans/directors stated that the amount of money paid to those who work with student teachers should be increased. More than 10 percent said it should increase to $750 per student teacher or higher; 31.4 percent said it should be at least $500. The average amount recommended per student teacher was $337 and the median amount was $300. Almost 30 percent (27.9) felt there was no need at their schools to increase the stipend. Interestingly, one director noted that the stipend for supervising student teachers at her institution had not changed in over 20 years.

Support from State Departments of Education Related to Cooperating Teachers

Telephone contact to the state certification officer at 46 state offices of education revealed that only five states -- Hawaii, Ohio, South Carolina, and Georgia assist in paying cooperating teachers a monetary remuneration for working either with student teachers or early field experience

pre-student teachers. The amount paid by the state office per student teacher in Hawaii is $475 per year (includes both student teaching and pre-student teaching); Ohio, $820 per student per year (includes both student teaching and pre-student teaching); South Carolina, $65 per student teacher; and Georgia, $50 per student teacher for cooperating teachers who have not completed supervision training, $250 per student teacher for teachers who have completed 15 credit hours of supervision training. The survey did not document assistance by state offices of education for mentoring or internship programs which are state supported.

Inquiry as to whether the state offices of education either encouraged or required that cooperating teachers complete college course work in supervision before accepting the responsibility to supervise student teachers found that 12 states (Alabama, California, Connecticut, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Dakota, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Dakota, and Tennessee) do require completion of course work. This ranged from inservice training by the college/university (the length of inservice determined by the institution) to required certification in supervision. Five states (Hawaii, Indiana, Kentucky, Minnesota, and North Carolina) reported that they encourage completion of college credit course work in supervision but do not require it. The remaining 35 states and the District of Columbia reported no program for state encouraged or required course work in supervision.

Summary and Recommendations

This study attempted to gather basic information about how much we pay cooperating teachers in this country. The findings reported herein correlate closely with previous research (AACTE, 1991) and add new knowledge in regards to how cooperating teachers are rewarded. In most states the decision on payment is left entirely with the teacher training institution that recruits these individuals as partners into their teacher training programs. Few states provide any money support either to cooperating teachers directly or as a subsidy to colleges/universities for payment to cooperating teachers.

Most institutions (70.8 percent) pay an honorarium to cooperating teachers who supervise

student teachers. The amount averages $112 per student teacher with no significant difference between those institutions which operate on a semester system as compared to a quarter system. Few colleges/universities (only 11.6 percent) pay cooperating teachers who supervise the work of pre-student teachers in their early field experiences. Those who do, pay an average of $59.

Besides monetary payments, almost one in four institutions grant tuition waivers to educators who supervise student teachers, averaging 2.5 credit hours per student teacher. Less than 10 percent (7.7) grant waivers to those who supervise pre-student teaching field experiences. About one-third of colleges and universities also offer additional incentives such as tickets to college/university sponsored activities, library cards, dinners, parking passes, use of recreational facilities, etc.

Cooperating teachers in this country are grossly underpaid for their services. While the average dollar amount paid to student teaching supervisors was reported as $112 in this study, the vast majority of college and university deans/directors (72.1 percent) recommend that it be more than tripled to about $340, and almost one-third feel that it should be a minimum of $500. Furthermore, inasmuch as 88.4 percent of reporting institutions make no payment at all to teachers who supervise early field experience or pre-student teaching, it seems that efforts ought to be made to provide these people with meaningful monetary stipends as well.

In a 1989-90 study of 601 institutions, Owings and Reitzammer (personal communication, October 31, 1991) reported that on the average, student teachers spent 380 hours in the classroom under the direction of their cooperating teacher. Doesn't the cooperating teacher deserve more than a token payment for the many hours of coaching and mentoring given to new people entering the profession?

Those of us who work in teacher education often refer to the local schools -- and the cooperating teacher in particular -- as the most important partner in the preparation and training of new teachers joining our ranks. If such is the case, then we ought to compensate these people more in terms of the value they bring to our programs. Few college professors would accept a

consulting contract that asks them to give hours of their time and energy over a period of 12 to 15 weeks for an average payment of only $112. As a whole, teacher training programs are benefiting from the services of educational professionals at a remuneration level that is embarrassingly low. If we don't do something to try to increase payments and rewards, the partnership which is so important in the training of future teachers is in danger of losing its most significant member.

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